

Identifying Key Factors Affecting Novice Players Learning of Soccer Skills

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Abstract Acquiring a skill has always been linked to various factors in sport field. The literature showed that there is a lack of studies to address the factors that would drive novice players to learn soccer skills. Performing complex skills is typically the main concern of most novice players because of its role in a game play. Therefore, this paper reviewed some previous studies in the field of sport education to gain the sufficient insights about these factors in learning situation. A holistic view of these factors and the relation between them are presented in this paper. Such view can help enrich the current body of knowledge about how to formulate a sufficient environmental conditions for learning soccer skills among novice players.

Keywords Sport education, Self-Based knowledge, Soccer game

1. Introduction

There are many challenges that can face novice soccer players when learning complex skills in which the anticipation of more than one player is required. The way novice learners about sport skills may vary from one country to another which typically depends on the coaches' views and other environmental conditions [1]. Learning complex soccer skills has always been concerned about learning mechanisms for promoting novice players to accommodate skills that can be practiced individual or in peer. With this in mind, several scholars [2-4] have considered the needs for various learning techniques to be merged to the classic way for performing physical actions. Soccer is one example in which the skills associated with several elements, such as the technical and tactical, actual physical and emotional skills is of concern among its players. Meanwhile, it is evident from the literature that coaches and sport researchers ought to develop their knowledge of these different skills during reasonably competitive matches, with special reference to the activities players engaged with [5].

Some previous studies like the one conducted by Salas, et al. [6] reported how certain environmental and personal skill dimensions would impact players to perform high intensity during the match. The authors stated that players are always in a need for controlling the intensity of his movements in order to achieve maximal performance.

Even though most of the time they do not rely on their

physical skills, they tend to apply balance between the technical required in a definite tactical situation. This includes the ability to execute optimal intensity with strong stretching and strength training foundation. As such, coaches consider the use of multimedia as an interactive mean for players to acquire certain skills.

2. Challenges and Predictors of Learning Soccer Skills

Learning soccer skills requires the utilization of sufficient learning and teaching strategies in order to promote players to acquire the necessary skills by providing the necessarily learning materials [2]. There have been several assumptions about the relevance of learning materials to the players' learning style. According to Villwock, et al. [7], novice soccer players tends to relies on learning materials to consolidate a proper understanding of certain skills. Soccer players then tryout the learned skills based on the supervision of coaches or other soccer experts. Despite the importance of learning materials in acquiring a complex soccer skills, some studies argued that current efforts to enforce a balanced learning styles (class-based and field-based) is still lacking. This can be reasoned to that coaches prefer to use the non-classic method to teach novice soccer players the skill. Weiss and Friedrichs [8] highlighted that coach's directions to perform certain skill has always been used as the main source among soccer players.

However, the way coaches plan the teaching of a skill may vary from one to another which found by some previous studies to significantly influence players' general attitude and perception about the taught skills. Nevertheless, continues support given by coaches to players has also been

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found to form a positive perception to learn the skills [9]. From this, it can be concluded that coach direction, continues support, and teaching method have a positive influence on players' behavior to perform the skill.

In addition, the limited utilization of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools among soccer players may also hinder their learning of complex skills. Previous studies suggested that novice soccer players may face some difficulties understanding the fragments of a skill especially when it involves more than one player [10, 11]. Therefore, computer based learning is necessary for players to multimedia elements as an attempt to learn about the skill and apply it in the field. Meanwhile, soccer players may require elements such as video and text without considering players demands to truly use presented content effectively to acquire definite skill [4]. This is because players ought to be more concern about gaining technical and tactical knowledge so that it can be used during the match.

Meng, et al. [12] stated that software tools can help players find answers and decide the technique for the right situation. As such, learning software of technical skills for example has the potential for fostering players' understanding of the skill.

On the other hand, the researcher personal experience as a football coach along with the current lack of evidence related to the effect of environmental elements on player's skills development. Most times, coaches put the balls aside when preparing for some kind of endurance training or speed training. For novice players, working with the ball is

essential and lots of touches are needed [13]. This include formalizing oneself with the field. Also engaging soccer players with group activities is essential to improve their player performance [14]. However, these training sessions usually last for a short period of time in which coaches plan the training session with partial multimedia support [15, 16]. Hence, providing appropriate soccer field can also play a role in getting players ready to adapt certain skill in a game play. Yongjin and Li-jun [17] asserted that a step to endurance training will motivate players more and when it is conducted correctly, players will be able to apply learned skill faster. In addition, soccer players can learn more about the game roles and getting enough knowledge about the opponent.

Other behavioral aspects have also been addressed to influence the way soccer player attain to the learning of certain skill. Studies like Kremer and Busby [18] addressed the importance of motivation as the core element for sustaining players' interest to the mastering of soccer skills. This is because, motivation as a factor drives soccer players to pay extra attention to the learning activity. Meanwhile, Tomlinson [19] linked the relevance of learning materials to the activity drives learners' learning in accordance to their needs. Previous studies revealed that ensuring the design of learning materials in accordance to the learners' cognitive ability would positively contribute to the learners' learning performance. Similarly in sport, soccer players can benefit a lot from the use of materials designed to illustrate abstract idea about certain soccer skill.

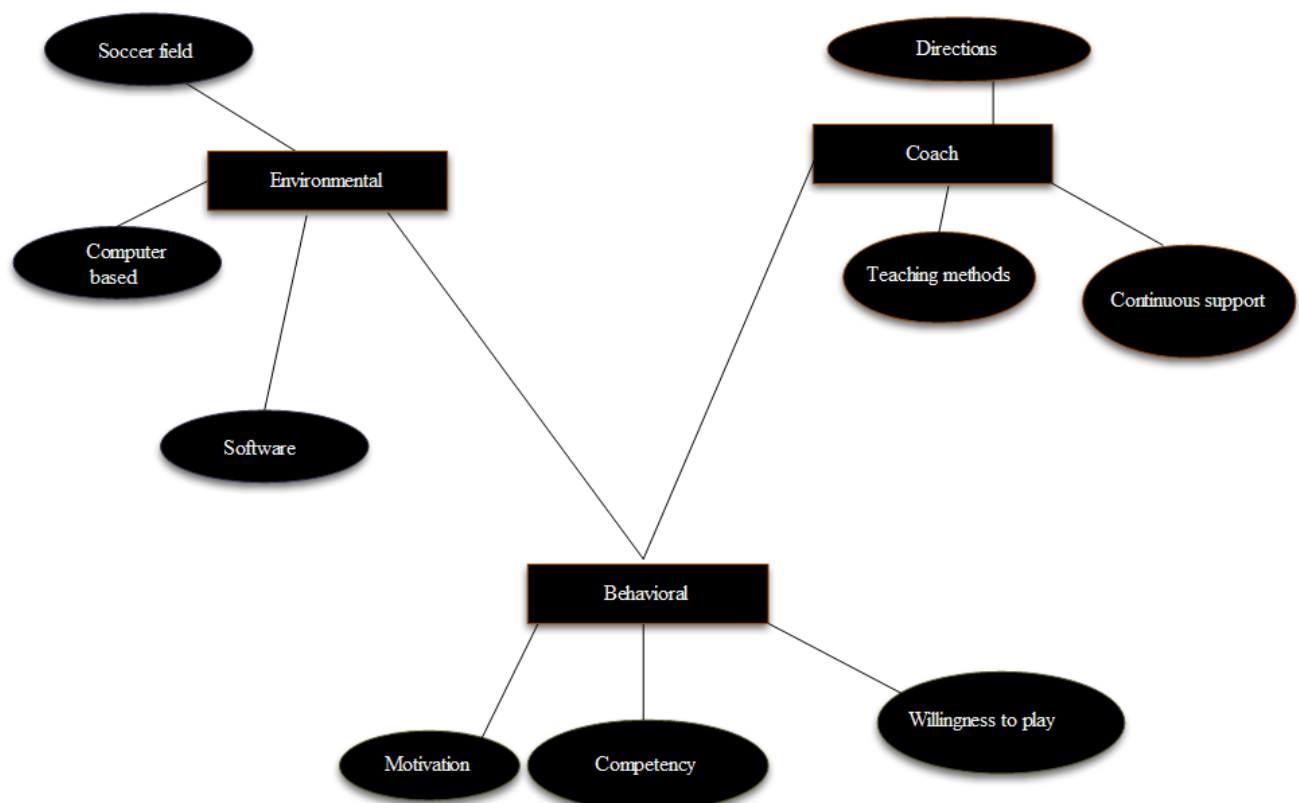


Figure 1. A combination of key factors

The process associated with acquiring soccer skills require the acquisition of that skill through the participating in activities and articulating ways that dramatically help to foster the development of one's knowledge about the skill [20]. Intrinsically, novice soccer players usually pose different levels of competency in which it depends on their personal characteristics to learn a specific skill. With this in mind, previous studies like O'Rourke and Custance [21] suggested establishing competency among learners by enabling them to find solutions to problems they have never encountered before. This is assumed to steer deeper learning by providing access to a series of skills and methods that equip learners to become effective problem solvers.

On the other hand, the level of competency with regards to the learning task may be neglected by the personal willingness to play or to perform the skill. This is because allowing knowledge to be adapted in new situations may not direct learners' competency to perform better at the task at hand. O'Rourke and Custance [21] reasoned this to the activity generated by process-driven systems creates deep learning environments in which key content elements can be placed within existing conceptual structures. After all, we summarized these assumptions supported by previous studies into one holistic picture shown in Figure 1.

3. Future Works

Future studies can consider examining the direct and indirect effect of environmental, behavioral, and coach related factors on players learning performance. This include investigating the intra relationships between these factors in accordance to the players' knowledge of certain skills (such as tactical and technical skills). In addition, future studies can also discover how players' learning style can favour the relationship between these factors from different perspectives.

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